

Message Text

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72

ORIGIN EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-10 SCI-03 PM-03 SAJ-01 L-02

IO-03 COA-01 EB-03 NSF-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 NSC-07 NSCE-00 /073 R

DRAFTED BY EA:RLSNEIDER:AVM

APPROVED BY EA:RLSNEIDER

EA/ANP - MR. MOSER

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P 031943Z MAY 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 091290

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCLR, AS, UR, PBOR

SUBJECT: RUSSIAN OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS

1. AUSTRALIAN MINISTER FERNANDEZ INFORMED DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SNEIDER IN CONFIDENCE ABOUT RECENT EXCHANGE WITH USSR ON ACTIVITIES OF RUSSIAN OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP (FEDOR LITKE) IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS.

2. ACCORDING TO FERNANDEZ, FEDOR LITKE WAS FOUND BY AUSTRALIAN SURVEILLANCE TO BE ANCHORED AT POCKLINGTON REEF, LOCATED BETWEEN SOLOMON ISLANDS AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA. THE SHIP HAD BEEN KEPT UNDER AUSTRALIAN SURVEILLANCE AND WAS PHOTOGRAPHED. AUSTRALIANS HAD DISCOVERED THAT SHIP WAS NOT ONLY ANCHORED AT REEF BUT HAD PLACED EQUIPMENT AND TENTS THERE.

3. ON APRIL 24, GOA CALLED IN SOVIET EMBASSY TO REQUEST IT TO WITHDRAW SHIP INTO INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND STATING CONFIDENTIAL

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ITS RIGHT TO REMOVE EQUIPMENT FROM REEF, IF NECESSARY.

FEDOR LITKE HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN GIVEN CLEARANCE, AT SOVIET REQUEST, FOR VISITS TO CAIRNS AND TOWNSVILLE ONLY, BUT HAD VISITED JUST CAIRNS.

4. ON MAY 1 SOVIET EMBASSY ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM MOSCOW RESPONDED THAT NAVIGATIONAL NOTICES FOR OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN THIS AREA BY FEDOR LITKE HAD BEEN ISSUED IN

1972. FURTHERMORE, 1956 MAPS ISSUED BY AUSTRALIA, US, AND UK INDICATED THAT SOVEREIGNTY OVER POCKLINGTON REEF WAS NOT DETERMINED. SOVIETS, HOWEVER, AGREED TO REMOVE INSTALLATIONS FROM REEF STATING THAT VESSEL RESEARCH HAD BEEN CONCLUDED.

5. FERNANDEZ STATED THAT GOA WISHED TO INFORM US OF THIS INCIDENT IN CONFIDENCE. RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SURVEILLANCE, TERRITORIAL WATERS, OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH, DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE091290
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RLSNEIDER:AVM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740107-0111
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740575/aaaacpli.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 JUN 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <31 JAN 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RUSSIAN OCEANOGRAPHIC SHIP IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS
TAGS: OCLR, PBOR, AS, UR
To: CANBERRA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005